

Congressman Will Travel Next Week for Kickoff Ceremonies; Will Also Meet with Various Political Leaders to Discuss U.S.-Netherlands Partnerships on Renewable Energy & Economy

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that he will travel to Amsterdam next week to join Her Royal Highness Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands for a kickoff of the quadricentennial celebration of Henry Hudson's exploration and discovery of the river in New York that now bears his name. Throughout the remainder of the year, the U.S. and the Netherlands will be celebrating 400 years of friendship and a shared history with various events and festivities.

The congressman initiated the federal effort to organize this year's celebrations in New York of Hudson's historic voyage as well as the quadricentennial anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's exploration of the lake that now bears his name and the bicentennial celebration of Robert Fulton's invention of the steamboat in New York. In addition to meeting with the queen, Hinchey has a full agenda during this four day trip to the Netherlands that includes meetings with various political leaders to discuss U.S.-Netherlands partnerships on renewable energy and economic matters.

"New York and the Netherlands have such a rich shared history that will be strengthened through this quadricentennial celebration of Henry Hudson's discovery and exploration of the river that now bears his name," Hinchey said. "I am honored to be able to participate in the Netherlands' ongoing celebration of the quadricentennial and serve as a representative from the Hudson River Valley. Our close relationship with the Netherlands continues and this quadricentennial celebration brings that to the fore and enables people to understand and celebrate the 400th anniversary of this very important event. I look forward to our two nations strengthening our relationship even further over the next 100 years as we look to the 500th anniversary of Henry Hudson's discovery and exploration."

Hinchey will be part of a quadricentennial delegation to the Netherlands from New York that includes Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz and Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Commission Chair Joan Davidson. The congressman's agenda includes public events with Her Royal Highness Queen Beatrix that will celebrate Henry Hudson's voyage.

The congressman, who has a long public record of supporting historic preservation and advancing programs that help inform the public about New York's rich history, has long been interested in the story of Henry Hudson's voyage up the now-Hudson River in 1609 and the subsequent development of New York by the Dutch. The settlement of the Dutch in New York led to the city becoming the most important travel region in the newly developed America. The importance of the river increased over time and led to the development of the Erie Canal, which enabled a growing population to move further west. The development of the canal also made New York City the most significant city on the east coast, settling what had been a two-way competition between Boston and Philadelphia for that status. The establishment of New York as a trading post also made the city a center for international trade.

Hinchey noted how Amsterdam was the most diverse city in the world during the 17th Century and how the integration of New York City was patterned after the integration of the population in the Netherlands. The congressman pointed out that many parts of New York City, such as Brooklyn and Harlem, are named after places in the Netherlands.

While the congressman will be based in Amsterdam, he will travel to The Hague for meetings with Members of Parliament as well as Ministers and Director Generals to discuss policy issues of mutual concern, including the economy, food safety, and sustainable energy. The congressman intends to discuss his efforts to make New York an international leader in solar energy research and development and will look for ways to partner with the Netherlands on solar energy products developed in the United States. Hinchey will also meet with the U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, James Culbertson, as well as members of the diplomatic corps. Hinchey will attend events with members of the U.S. and Dutch press corps who are interested in covering the congressman's trip and current events.

"Our mutual interests with the Netherlands extend well beyond our shared history," Hinchey said. "Four hundred years later, I am confident that the U.S. and the Netherlands can find ways to further our relationship in a manner that will benefit both nations. I am very much looking forward to identifying opportunities for our two countries to work together in a productive manner that will grow New York's and our nation's economy and develop new ways for our region to advance renewable energy."

The congressman will also hold discussions on international banking and the global economic crisis. Hinchey will also visit the Royal Dutch Mint in Utrecht for the striking of the Henry Hudson Commemorative Coin and the New Amsterdam coin. Hinchey will have meetings with various mayors of Dutch towns, which will culminate in a visit to Breukelyn, the town from which the Borough of Brooklyn in New York derives its name. Hinchey will also travel to the Anne

Frank House for a private visit to what is now a museum and solemn reminder of a remarkable young woman.

Hinchey has personally secured \$1.24 million from Congress for quadricentennial celebrations in New York, including \$750,000 that was included in a funding bill that President Obama signed into law earlier this week. In 2002, New York State enacted legislation creating a state quadricentennial commemoration commission. Using the funds that Hinchey secured, the National Park Service (NPS) will coordinate educational, cultural and historical projects with the state commission while also consulting with the congressman. It's also expected that the state commission and the NPS will work together to support and facilitate marketing efforts for other commemorative related activities.

The NPS has already announced that it will use the first round of federal quadricentennial funding Hinchey secured for: Teaching the Quadricentennial: A Clearinghouse for Educators -- \$20,000; The Great Hudson Sojourn and Hudson Valley Ramble -- \$20,000; Quadricentennial Trail System -- \$40,000; Explore the Hudson posters—\$50,000; Banners Along the Hudson—\$10,000; Hudson River Underwater Maritime Heritage Project--\$25,000; M/V Day Peckinpaugh – A 2009 Voyage of Rediscovery--\$75,000; Canal Schooner Lois McClure's Voyage to Quebec City, Canada in 2008 -- \$152,000; Hudson River Valley -- \$50,000 (lead: Hudson River Greenway); and Champlain Valley -- \$50,000 (lead: Champlain Valley Basin Program).

Hinchey is the author of the legislation that created the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, the first federal action formally recognizing the fundamentally significant role the people of the Hudson Valley played in the early development of America and its institutions. The congressman has worked to secure various allocations of funding for the heritage area. Information on New York's planned quadricentennial celebration can be found at www.exploreny400.com/Home.aspx.